

Message Text

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PAGE 01 FREETO 01407 131052Z

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 CPR-01 SY-05 USSS-00

SAM-01 /057 W

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P 131010Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3093

C O N F I D E N T I A L FREETOWN 1407

FOR ASST SEC SCHAUFLE FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SL, OVIP (STEVENS, SIACA P.)

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT STEVENS VISIT TO U.S.

REF: A. FREETOWN 1402 B. FREETOWN 817

1. IN DETERMINING LEVEL AT WHICH STEVENS IS RECEIVED WITHIN USG DURING FORTHCOMING VISIT TO US, I BELIEVE THERE NUMBER OF CONSIDERATIONS WHICH STRONGLY SUGGEST APPROPRIATENESS HIS BEGINRECEIVED FOR SHORT CALLS BY PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY IF THEIR SCHEDULES AT ALL PERMIT.

2. FOUR OF THESE REASONS WERE OUTLINED IN REF B, REMAIN IN MY OPINION FULLY VALID, AND ARE SUMMARIZED BELOW BUT NOT REPEATED HERE IN DETAIL. NEW FACTOR, WHICH I BELIEVE MAY HAVE CONSIDERABLE RELEVANCE, STEMS FROM RECENT COOLNESS OF OUR RELATIONS WITH GHANA AND NIGERIA. SIERRA LEONE, ALTHOUGH SMALLER, IS LIKE GHANA AND NIGERIA ONE OF FOUR FORMER BRITISH COLONIES IN WEST AFRICA. ITS STANCE IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS IS INCREASINGLY MODERATE AND COOPERATIVE FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW, IN CONTRAST ITS TWO LARGER ANGLOPHONE BROTHERS. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT USEFUL SIGNAL
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PAGE 02 FREETO 01407 131052Z

COULD BE PROVIDED TO BOTH GHANA AND NIGERIA OF HOW ONE

MOST PRODUCTIVELY HANDLES RELATIONS WITH USG IF LEADER OF LITTLE SIERRA LEONE IS RECEIVED AT TOP LEVELS USG. EXAMPLE OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CIVILITY AND COOPERATIVENESS ON ONE HAND AND ACCESS ON THE OTHER UNDOUBTEDLY WOULD NOT BE LOST ON GHANA AND NIGERIA AND WOULD ALSO SERVE TO REINFORCE VALUE OF FRIENDLY, NON-PROVOCATIVE RELATIONS WITH USG. IN MEETING WITH ME EARLIER THIS WEEK, STEVENS HINTED BROADLY AT THIS THEME, CRITICIZING NIGERIAN REFUSAL AND GHANAIAAN CANCELLATION OF SECRETARY'S VISITS AND NOTING THAT SMALLER COUNTRIES MAY TURN OUT TO BE BETTER AND MORE USEFUL FRIENDS OF US DEPUTY FONMIN AND MY LIBERIAN COLLEAGUE INFORM ME STEVENS MADE SIMILAR COMMENT DURING VISIT BY LIBERIAN FONMIN DENNIS TO BRIEF STEVENS ON SECRETARY'S VISIT TO MONROVIA.

3. EARLIER FOUR CONSIDERATIONS, YOU WILL REMEMBER, WHICH WERE SPELT OUT FULLY IN REF B, ARE STEVENS' RECOLLECTION THAT HE WAS FIRST AFRICAN HEAD OF STATE MET BY PRESIDENT NIXON AT WHITE HOUSE IN 1969, SIERRA LEONE'S POTENTIAL IMPORTANCE AS A MODERATE WITHIN OAU AND NON-ALIGNED CONTEXTS, STEVENS' BELIEF THAT PRESIDENT IS AVAILABLE TO IMPORTANT AFRICANS EVEN OF LESS THAN HEAD OF STATE LEVEL, AND STEVENS' PROMINENT DISPLAY OF AUTOGRAPHED PHOTO OF PRESIDENT FORD. SAMUELS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ITINERARY, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 MAY 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976FREETO01407
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760184-1046
From: FREETOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760559/aaaabymn.tel
Line Count: 86
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 FREETOWN 1402, 76 FREETOWN 817
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 JUN 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <14 OCT 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESIDENT STEVENS VISIT TO U.S.
TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, SL, (STEVENS, SIAKA P)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006